

Application No. 10/650,584
Amendment dated January 20, 2006
Reply to Office Action of July 22, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Responsive to the Official Action mailed July 22, 2005, applicant has amended the claims of her application in an earnest effort to place this case in condition for allowance. Specifically, claim 4 has been cancelled, independent claim 1 amended, and new claims 7-11 added. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Action, the Examiner has rejected the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. §103, with reliance upon U.S. Patent No. 5,459,912, to Oathout, in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,328,279, to Meitner et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,645,930, to Wallis et al. However, as set forth in the pending claims, it is believed that applicants' novel nonwoven wipe, and method of formation, are clearly patentably distinct from these references, even when combined, and accordingly, the Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed in the Specification, the present invention is directed to solving problems typically encountered in connection with nonwoven wipe constructs employed in so-called "clean rooms", such as are employed in connection with manufacture of electronic devices and the like. In such an environment, the provision of wipes which exhibit low linting characteristics has been found to be extremely important. Moreover, while the use of surfactants can be desirable to impart hydrophilicity, their use can undesirably contribute to wipes exhibiting a relatively high sodium ion particle count, which can have deleterious effects on electronic device manufacture.

In the Action, the Examiner has specifically acknowledged the deficiencies in the primary Oathout reference, in stating that "Oathout does not disclose that the wipes should have a sodium ion content less than 45 ppm, and that it should be rinsed with acetic acid/water

Application No. 10/650,584
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solution. Applicant must respectfully note this fundamental deficiency in the principal Oathout reference, since the secondary references do not overcome this deficiency in that they fail to teach a *synthetic/natural fiber wipe exhibiting low sodium ion particle content*.

The Examiner has cited the Meitner et al. patent in light of the acknowledged deficiencies in the principal Oathout reference. However, Meitner et al. specifically contemplates a wipe formed from *all synthetic fibers* (see column 6, lines 37-38, wherein the wipe is specified as comprising "thermoplastic fibers"). Thus, only applicant's own disclosure would suggest modifying the teaching of Oathout in light of Meitner et al.

In fact, Meitner et al. *teaches away* from inclusion of natural fibers, in accordance with the present invention, since it shows *very high sodium ion counts for natural fiber wipers* (see wiper B of Examples).

Applicant respectfully refers to M.P.E.P. Section 2143.01, which specifically requires that to formulate a proper obviousness rejection, "the prior art must suggest the desirability of the claimed invention" and further requires that "the proposed modification cannot change the principle of operation of a reference". Clearly, Meitner et al. is *specifically limited* in its teachings to the formation of a wipe from all synthetic material, and thus *teaches away* from a synthetic/natural fiber wipe, in accordance with the present invention.

In the Action, the Examiner has further relied upon the Wallis et al. reference, but it is respectfully maintained that again, only applicant's own disclosure would suggest combining this reference with the Oathout and Meitner et al. patents. Wallis contemplates that wipes be impregnated with acidic solutions "which are intended to reduce or eliminate the possibility of spontaneous combustion of the contaminated wipes" (see Abstract). Thus, there is *no teaching*

Application No. 10/650,584
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or suggestion in this further reference that treatment of a wipe , in accordance with the present invention, with acidic acid and de-ionized water, can provide the desirably low sodium ion counts achieved by practice of the present invention.

In the Action, the Examiner states:

It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have rinsed the fabric of Oathout with acidic acid/water solution of Wallis, motivated by the expectation that this would provide the wipe with protection against spontaneous combustion when the wipe was used to contain spills of alkaline products."

Applicants must respectfully maintain that this statement belies the fact that those skilled in the art *would not* consider the teachings of Wallis et al. when trying to provide a wipe comprised of synthetic/natural fibers with a low sodium ion particle count. This is simply beyond and outside of the teachings of Wallis et al.

Again, applicant respectfully refers to M.P.E.P. Section 2143.01, which requires that *the prior art must suggest the desirability of the claimed invention.*

By this response, applicant has added new claims 7-11 which specify the preferred practice of her invention, wherein a wipe is provided with a sodium ion count of less than 25 ppm, achieved by treatment with an acidic acid and de-ionized water solution. It is believed that these claims are further distinct from the cited prior art, even when the teachings of the prior art are combined.

In view of the foregoing, formal allowance of claims 1-3, and 5-11 is believed to be in order and is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner wish to speak with applicant's attorney, they may be reached at the number indicated below.

Application No. 10/650,584
Amendment dated January 20, 2006
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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required in connection with this submission to Deposit Account No. 23-0785.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this paper is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage at First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on **January 20, 2006**.

